UNITY

FREEDOM, FELLOWSHIP AND CHARACTER IN RELIGION

MEXICO

Questions About Education in Mexico - - - - - - - - *Rafael Ramirez*

Socialist Education in Mexico - *Enrique Beltran*

Modern Trends in Mexico's Secondary Education - - *Teodoro E. Santacruz*

Social Revolution in Mexico - *Edwin H. Wilson*

The Revolutionary Function of Art - - - - - - - - - *Diego Rivera*

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The Field

"The world is my country, to do good is my Religion."

Susan B. Anthony

Born February 15, 1820, at Adams, Mass.

Died March 14, 1906, 86 years old, at Rochester, New York.

Quaker father and Quaker rearing.

1848—Became interested in Woman's Rights.

1852—Joined Woman's Rights Association.

1860—Married Women's property act passed in New York State.

1869—Wyoming was first state to adopt Woman Suffrage.

1920—Woman Suffrage Amendment passed, 100 years after birth of Susan B. Anthony. Declared law August 26, 1930.

1936—August 26th. Postage stamp commemorating Suffrage for Women depicting Anthony portrait.

Portrait Monument of Susan B. Anthony in Capitol at Washington, by Adelaide Johnson, sculptor.

Portrait bust in Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. Done from life, by Adelaide Johnson, sculptor.

The day is past when Susan B. Anthony can be classed with propagandists and special pleaders—she belongs with the history makers of the Republic. While she neither began nor ended woman's struggle toward equality with man, she has left upon the whole movement the stamp of an imperishable personality. An obscure school teacher, at the age of thirty-three she swore to change the mind of the ruling class of men as to the barbarous position of women under the English Common Law, the traditions of the Church, and all medieval conceptions of their place in society; and she lived to see her vow well-nigh fulfilled.

Every woman who holds a good job; every woman who goes to college; every woman lawyer, doctor, professor, scientist; every woman released from an intolerable marriage bond; every mother who has power to protect her children; every woman who votes owes it in large part to Susan B. Anthony—*The Woman Who Changed the Mind of a Nation.*

—SUSAN B. ANTHONY MEMORIAL COMMITTEE.

UNITY

"He Hath Made of One All Nations of Men"

Volume CXVIII MONDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 1937 No. 12

REVOLUTION

"Any people anywhere being inclined and having the power have the right to rise up and shake off the existing government, and form a new one that suits them better. This is a most valuable, a most sacred right—a right which we hope and believe is to liberate the world."

—Abraham Lincoln.

MEXICO—AND TROTSKY

It is interesting to speculate as to where the hunted Trotsky would have gone in his flight from Norway if the ports of Mexico had not been open to him. Another legend of a flying Russian might have taken the place of that of "the flying Dutchman!" It is interesting also to speculate as to what this reception of Trotsky in Mexico really means. Of course, one cannot really know, for Communism is a "mysterious bourn" the secrets of which are unknown to those who dwell in outer darkness. But the set-up is suggestive. Thus, Mexico and Soviet Russia are the two great Communist countries of the world. Trotsky is an exile from the latter; banned by all capitalistic countries, he takes refuge in the former as an honored guest. In the recent Moscow trials (see below!), thanks to Trotsky, Mexico City suddenly became the source of a series of savage onslaughts upon Russia, based on denials of the stories told by the defendants and sweeping indictments of the Soviet government. Does this mean that Mexican Communism is of the Trotsky brand, while the home country of Bolshevism remains stoutly loyal to Stalin? If so, we have the amazing spectacle of the Communist world furiously and fiercely divided against itself. Suppose, now, that the area of Communism were extended—Trotsky holding control of the West, and Stalin of the East: Wouldn't this mean, logically, that the Trotsky world and the Stalin world would eventually fight one another for supremacy, and Communism therefore breed war just like Capitalism? It is a popular doctrine these days that war is a product of Capitalism—as though there had been no war until the capitalistic era of history!—and that to get rid of Capitalism and establish Communism will end war. We don't believe it! That economic factors operate as causes of armed conflict, and that such factors exist in the capitalistic system, is true. But there are other and manifold factors involved in this war problem, beginning, for example, with human nature. There is no more savage contention in the world today than that between the Trotskyites and the Stalinites. They hate one another as the Catholics and Protestants hated one another in the post-Reformation period. Mexico and Russia would be at war this minute if they could reach one another. Alas, for man!

THE MOSCOW TRIALS

Ghastly beyond words seem these latest trials in Moscow—ghastly and incredible! Walter Duranty has stated emphatically in his despatches in the New York *Times* that the defendants are guilty, that their sensational confessions must be accepted as true. But this does not remove the mystery, for how can such men be guilty of such things, and what are we to think of a revolution which ends up with the pioneer revolutionists, the friends and associates of Lenin, selling out their country and their cause to the two enemies, Japan and Germany? Lurking in the background is the terrible memory that Lenin trusted these men who have one by one passed through the court to the firing squad, and that Lenin never trusted Stalin—indeed, expressly warned against him. And all the while the great Trotsky, supreme among the original Bolsheviks next only to Lenin himself, is protesting innocence in his hopeless exile in Mexico. What a picture! Out of it there proceeds only one thing with any clearness, and

that is that the whole cause of the Russian revolution stands irreparably damaged. We can never think of this cause in the same way again. The "red" dictatorship has now moved so far over toward the Nazi dictatorship that it is hard to discern the difference. On the one hand is the savage abomination of the trials—the fact pointed out with ruthless rigor by Friedrich Adler in his pamphlet, *The Witchcraft Trial in Moscow* (Socialist Party, 549 Randolph Street, Chicago, Preface by Norman Thomas), that the trials revive the worst features of the medieval inquisitions, depending not upon evidence, but upon tortures and extorted confessions. Hitler's "purge" was no worse—in some ways better, as violence without the disguise of barbaric justice! On the other hand is the revelation of widespread and deep-rooted disaffection against the Stalin regime—the certainty, which can alone explain the trials, that from great leaders at the top down probably to great masses at the bottom, there are in Russia the opponents of Moscow and all it stands for. This means rule by repression, terror, and death, just as in Berlin and Rome. Alas, what a tragedy! The French revolution—and Robespierre; and now the Russian revolution—and Stalin! Dictatorship, wherever it is, is wrong. Democracy by contrast stands vindicated.

ROOSEVELT AND THE NEW ADMINISTRATION

It seemed rather ridiculous for the President to be standing in the snow and sleet on that January inauguration day, the 20th last, discoursing in his best sermonic style on the rescue of this nation from injustice and poverty among the people, and never so much as casting an eye-glance across the sea to Europe. It is inconceivable that he does not know the imminence of war upon the continent. But does he know what such war, if or when it comes, will do to all his fondest hopes for political and economic reform? Does he realize that he stands at this very moment on the brink of the same ruin which engulfed Woodrow Wilson in 1917, destroying his administration and wrecking his life? Wilson had his "New Freedom," exactly as Roosevelt had his "New Deal." He was doing splendidly with it in those first two amazing years of his first term in Washington. And then came the War, and it was all over. Exactly as it will be all over with Roosevelt's second term if a war comes crashing into it after the pattern of 1914-17! Such a war, even though we do not enter into it, will so upset social conditions, so distract public attention, so absorb the energies of government, that all domestic affairs will straightway be forgotten. The "New Deal" will disappear like the "New Freedom" before it! But can we keep out of this war? "Aye, there's the rub." Certain it is that, if we plunge in, our democracy will be wrecked, our liberties destroyed, and the President himself, enjoying for a little time the glamor and glory of the heroic war-maker, will in the end meet all the disappointments, disillusionments, defeats, and despairs which overwhelmed his predecessor. Look abroad, Mr. President. There lies the secret of your fate—the nation's rendezvous with destiny. From this hour on, Mr. President, you have a primary and two-fold task: first, to prevent the threatened European war by every means that lies within your power; secondly, if that war comes, to keep America out of it at any cost. A hundred million people are looking to you in this dread hour to preserve the peace of this country and of the world.

THE FLOODS!

If there has been any more serious event in recent days than the Ohio River floods, serious at least for this country, we do not chance to know what it is. The seriousness of the disaster lies not in the sufferings of millions of people, the destruction of tens of millions of dollars' worth of property, the deaths of hundreds of men and women, terrible as are these accompaniments of the calamity, but in the calamity itself, and more particularly in its causes. There are those, we suppose, who will think of a flood as the work of God in punishment of the sins of men. That would seem plausible enough from the moral standpoint, for if the people were wicked enough to be wiped out in the days of Noah, we don't see why the American people, or any other people for that matter, should be spared today. But why should the people in the Ohio valley be smitten and not the people in the Hudson valley? And in any case, we do not think in such theological terms any more! Most persons probably regard these floods as the work of Nature—excessive rainfalls drenching the earth and overflowing the rivers. But why so much worse now than ever before—why such disasters only today? It is this question which brings us face to face with the real fact—not God, nor yet Nature, but man who has wantonly wasted and ravished a countryside and thus upset the balance of forces which has hitherto enabled Nature safely to take care of herself? There was a time when we had forests, and rich earth, and abundant top-soil, and the rain was absorbed as by a sponge and thus conserved as though in hidden cisterns for the sustenance of all natural growths. But now we have destroyed the forests, and impoverished the earth, and stripped away the top-soil, and slashed the landscape with cement highways—and lo, the rain races to the rivers as down the gutters of a city street. Drought and flood—these are the twin and complementary disasters of a country which we have looted in our greed and ruined in our heedlessness. The floods therefore are our own doing. *We* are responsible. Perhaps, after all, we are being punished for our sins!

THE UNITARIANS SEEK A NEW PRESIDENT

The nomination of Frederick M. Eliot, of St. Paul, as candidate for the presidency of the American Unitarian Association, a nomination which will unquestionably be endorsed by formal election at the annual meetings in May, is an event not only of promise but of prophecy for all religious liberals. It is an omen of a new day for churches all too long languishing in confusion and uncertainty. Mr. Eliot is the grandson of the great William G. Eliot, founder of Washington University, St. Louis, and is the son of the saintly Christopher R. Eliot, for many years minister of the Bulfinch Place Church in Boston. He is a graduate of Harvard and of the Harvard Divinity School. There could be no better birth nor training than this! After a period of service as assistant to Dr. Crothers in the old First Parish, of Cambridge, Mr. Eliot went to St. Paul, and for twenty years has given distinguished ministry to Unity Church and to the city. An unblemishable character, a brilliant and courageous mind, utter devotion to religious and civic idealism, and a gentle yet staunch spirit, were revealed during these years as dominant qualities of this man's life. Then in 1934 came his appointment as chairman of the famous Appraisal Commission of the Unitarian body, and the discovery in him of leadership of the first order. Other persons of importance had their share in the work of the Commission, but Eliot's was the conceiving and directing mind. Even a casual reading of the Commission's report reveals a first-class achievement of religious statesmanship. What more inevitable than that Mr. Eliot should now himself be challenged to lead the Unitarians on their new path of progress into the future? We know with what conscientiousness Mr. Eliot has pondered the problem of moving out of the field of pastoral and public service into the field of executive administration. We know also with what a single eye to duty and devotion he has made his decision—and made it well, for as President of the American Unitarian Association he becomes minister of a nation-wide parish and servant of all public interests of human welfare. We believe that he is entering upon a life-career, and prophesy for it abounding happiness and memorable achievement.

Jottings

Gandhi has repudiated his title of "Mahatma." This action is one more evidence of his supreme humility. But as Gandhi did not himself choose this title, so now he cannot himself get rid of it. It was granted him by the spontaneous reverence of his people, and will be confirmed and immortalized by the sober judgment of history.

A ministerial friend tells us that he is not a "pacifist" but a *"pacigerent."* There's a word!—of the same origin and construction as "belligerent." It avoids all the negative implications of the more familiar word. Why not use it?

Football Coach Dana X. Bible has been called to the University of Texas at a salary of $15,000. This is twice the salary paid the President of the University, and some legislators are objecting. But why? Didn't Babe Ruth get more than the President of the United States? Isn't a successful athlete, according to American standards, the greatest of men?

"Every house can have a gas-proof room. Brown paper and paste is all that is necessary. Every draught must be stopped—chimney, windows, door cracks, and even the keyhole." This, in all seriousness, from the British Government's booklet on "How to Protect Your Home Against an Air-Raid," of which ten million copies are to be distributed.—*World Events.*

Accounts of an automobile disaster in the New York *Times:*

> *"I was driving at a moderate speed."*—Statement by the driver of the wrecked bus.
>
> *"We must have been going about 60 miles an hour."* —Statement by a passenger in the wrecked bus.

In these two contrasting statements we have the explanation of the great majority of automobile accidents today.

Every passing year brings renewed and impressive evidence that the Biblical story of the Flood must indeed be true.

J. H. H.

Questions About Education in Mexico

RAFAEL RAMIREZ

Although the culture of a country cannot be justly measured by the number of its people who can read and write, it is nevertheless proper to investigate to what degree the problem of illiteracy exists in our republic. The 1930 census shows the following figures, with reference to persons who at that time were ten years of age or older:

Persons knowing how to read and write	4,525,035
Persons knowing how to read only	261,384
Total of literate persons	4,786,419

The same census gives us the figures concerning individuals aged ten years or older, who are completely illiterate. In order to appreciate these numbers, I shall present them as follows:

Literate population	4,786,419
Illiterate population	6,962,517
Total population over 10 years of age	11,748,936

Inasmuch as these figures might not give a clear idea of this problem, we shall compare them in this way: out of every 1,000 inhabitants over ten years of age, 407 of them were literate persons according to the 1930 census, while the 593 remaining were completely illiterate. Expressing it in percentages, we will say:

Literate persons	40.7%
Illiterate persons	59.3%

Thus it is easy to grasp the idea that Mexico's condition, with reference to this problem, is by no means satisfactory and that public education must consider as one of its first tasks that of reducing to zero the present high percentage of illiteracy.

As the foregoing are total figures, inasmuch as they include the urban and rural population, it would be a good plan now to study this question with exclusive reference to the rural section of the population.

The 1930 census clearly suggests that of the total population of the country approximately one-third constitutes the urban centers, while two-thirds constitute the rural communities. Using these proportions for the moment, we find that the rural population over ten years of age is composed as follows:

Literate persons	3,190,946
Illiterate persons	4,641,678
Total rural population over ten years of age	7,832,624

Reducing the above figures to percentages, we find that they show approximately the same proportion mentioned before, that is to say, 40.7 per cent for the literate population and 59.3 per cent for the illiterate population. The facts, however, are somewhat different. In the cities and large centers of population, people have more educational opportunities, that is to say, schools exist in all such places. In the rural areas, schools are just beginning to be organized, and although there is already a good number of peasant communities where there are schools, many rural districts still remain without any educational institutions whatsoever. Furthermore, the acute poverty in the rural areas prevents the people from attending school in search of learning. For these reasons, it is not unreasonable to affirm that the percentage of illiteracy in the rural areas of the country is more or less 80 per cent. Of course, this percentage is even higher in remote places hard to reach due to the lack of roads or other means of communication; and it must be even higher in centers of dense indigenous population, where it probably is 100 per cent.

Next it would be well to consider the population of the country between the ages of six and ten. The 1930 census estimates it as 2,242,458. In accordance with the 2 to 1 ratio of rural population indicated in the preceding paragraph we have the following figures as to rural and urban distribution of the age-level under consideration:

Urban population from six to ten years	747,486
Rural population of the same ages	1,494,972
Total child-population	2,242,458

The above figures for the rural child-population are approximate inasmuch as, owing to the difficulties of making a census of the rural areas, it is possible that the number of children between the ages of six and ten in the rural communities comes quite close to 2,000,000. Of these 2,000,000 barely 600,000 attend the rural schools; so that there are more than 1,000,000 children in the rural areas who are practically condemned to illiteracy if the economic conditions of their parents do not improve and if the present rural school movement were to stop.

The causes of illiteracy in our country are many, but among them there are two which we consider as fundamental. The first is the extreme poverty of the masses, which is more accentuated in the rural areas. As long as people have nothing or almost nothing to eat, it is impossible for them to think of educating themselves, because before they can do this, the urgent thing for them is to work in order to earn their bread. The second cause is lack of educational opportunities and in some parts of the country none at all.

As is well known, the expression "illiteracy" is used to signify the incapacity of people ten years or older to read and write, or simply to read. But the mere incapacity to read and write is an unsatisfactory index for estimating the degree of culture of the country, because many of the persons who know how to read and, furthermore, how to write are truly illiterate in other aspects of life. This is due to the fact that reading and writing are not culture, properly speaking, but merely the instruments with which to acquire it. For culture, as we know, is quite another thing.

From the cultural point of view, Mexico is a heterogeneous country where at least three types of culture can be distinguished. According to Dr. Manuel Gamio, we might say that a good nucleus of the population of Mexico possesses an anachronous culture, due to its backward condition. "The population culturally anachronous," says Dr. Gamio,

> "which lives in the isolated zones and which may be estimated as high as 10% of the total population, is characterized by the great majority of material objects and things still of the same sort as those used by their ancestors prior to the conquest: the hut, the three-stone fireplace, the 'metate' for grinding the corn, clay jars and pitchers, 'huaraches' or Indian sandals, chile, corn, beans, pulque, etc. These things are relatively few in number, elementary and rudimentary in nature, and, in general usefulness, incomparably inferior to the material things of modern civilization or culture."

Another group of the population, and of greater

importance, belongs to the cultural type which we might call *intermediate*. Dr. Gamio says:

> "This group lives in more accessible regions as well as on the coasts, and constitutes perhaps 75 per cent of the total population of the republic. This group uses material artifacts and performs functions partly identical with those of the foregoing group and partly analogous to the social group of culture that we would call modern. The degree to which its life approximates one extreme or the other indicates the different levels of evolution of the sub-groups into which the entire mass could be divided."

With regard to the nucleus of population of the modern cultural type this student of the social structure of Mexico says:

> "It is made up of the rest of the population which either consumes or employs in great proportion modern objects made in the country or imported from abroad which both differ considerably and are superior to similar objects belonging to the nucleus of anachronous culture, due to the fact that they are of better quality and render better service as is seen in comparing the shoe with the huarache, or sandal, the mill with the 'metate,' the spinning-wheel with the Indian hand-distaff, the rifle with the bow and arrow, and so on."

Dr. Gamio concludes with the following remarks:

> "The standard of living of more than 12,000,000 is either deficient or semi-deficient from the material standpoint, which consequently carries with it the abnormality of their development in all aspects and principally in the biological aspect, as is shown, among other ways, by the high rate of mortality. The way to solve such an undesirable situation consists not only in obtaining economic betterment of this great mass of the population, but also in teaching it to raise its level of material culture which in turn can be achieved only through education adapted to the need, that is to say, by teaching them in a sensible and effective way to replace the deficient activities and instruments of their material culture with more useful and efficient means of modern culture."

To the foregoing may be added the consideration that manifestly the first two population-groups are backward, the first even more than the second; and that it is in these two groups that illiteracy prevails.

We do not for a moment agree that the percentage of illiteracy in our country measures its degree of culture, but we are of the conviction that ability to read and write represents a valuable possibility for advancing culturally by the use of the printed page, whether in books, pamphlets, or periodicals; we are also convinced of the need for all the people of the country to acquire this ability in some measure, because, as stated by an educator, *the cultural tragedy of Mexico lies in the fact that not all the people possess this means of acquisition.*

Here is our great problem. The spread of the rural schools could, in a long time, solve the problem, but the question concretely stated is this: How shall we wipe out illiteracy in a short time?

Consider the following facts:

There are at present 12,000 rural schools established and supported by the Federal Government. In these schools as well as in those supported by the state governments, approximately 600,000 children are being educated; but, as I have already stated, more than 1,000,000 children in rural areas lack educational opportunities. In order to meet their need, 28,000 more rural schools are required.

Now, the 12,000 schools mentioned have been created in a period of 14 years, that is to say, from 1922 to 1936. Before this period no one took an interest in educating the rural population. If we make the supposition that the conditions of the country continue to be normal, and if we also suppose that the economic capacity of the nation shall continue to increase in such a manner that we shall be able to create the schools necessary in accordance with the rhythm of these last years, that is, at the rate of 2,000 schools per year, we shall still need about fourteen years of incessant hard work. Not until then shall we be able to say that illiteracy lies a-dying, because with the educational advancement postulated thus, there will be no reason left for a tragic cultural condition in the country.

The foregoing estimate is based, as is natural, on a completely favorable hypothesis: peace within the country and the growth of national prosperity, things certainly to be desired, but insecure in a country which, politically, is not as yet fully defined and in which social transformation is pressing onward in a revolutionary degree.

We have also set out with the supposition that the annual increase in population will be at a standstill. At any rate, fourteen or fifteen years is a long period of time for putting an end to our tragic problem of illiteracy, using the rural school as the only instrument for our purpose. It is an efficient instrument, that we know; and also that it develops in the population important capacities for raising the level of social well-being.

Here in Mexico we know all this. Our problem is how, without the aid of a type of school-system which is foreign even to the discussion, to put an end to illiteracy in rural areas in a short space of time, that is, two or three years at the most, and not in fifteen or twenty years. A final problem is how to make the ability to read and write a vital cultural acquisition and not simply a functionless instrument, destined to deteriorate through lack of essential use or usefulness.

All conscientious and sincere-intentioned people in Mexico are at present concerned with a social campaign of this nature for the nation. By feeling our way perhaps we shall find a sure and straight road to the realization of our purpose.

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RABINDRANATH TAGORE: World-famous Indian poet and educator.

MORRIS TOPCHEVSKY: Chicago artist.

Socialist Education in Mexico

ENRIQUE BELTRAN

It has been said in Mexico by the declared or secret enemies of the socialist educational reform now taking place in Mexico that it is at bottom nothing more than a demagogic gesture, some going so far as to say that it has no scientific basis, and that it may even be an obstacle to the development of culture. But nothing is farther from the truth. If we have chosen the biological point of view to explain the new orientation of Mexican education, it is because that is the only basis from which we dare to speak with a certain amount of assurance. Besides, biology is particularly interesting because of its breadth and because of the nature of the problems which it treats in relation to man, who, in spite of his peculiar characteristics and the traits which human groups have acquired through the use of techniques, is really nothing more than a biological being united by close ties with the rest of the animals and plants which inhabit our planet, and subject, consequently, in many of the aspects of his life, to the great fundamental laws which govern the existence of organic matters.

Moreover, although my arguments will originate in the realm of biology, it will be a simple matter to broaden them so as to give a general idea of what science in general may expect from the new educational tendencies.

Article 3 of the Mexican constitution affirms:

> "The education imparted by the state shall be socialist and, besides excluding every religious doctrine, shall combat fanaticism and prejudice, to the end that the school shall organize its teaching and activities in a form which permits the creation in the youth of a rational and exact conception of the universe and the social life."

And as the succeeding paragraphs require that only the state shall impart primary, secondary, and normal instruction, and that private schools may operate only under authorization by the state and by adjusting themselves to the same orientations mentioned in the first paragraph, so it is evident that all primary, secondary, and normal education given in Mexico must follow the above stated lines.

The first requirement is that education must be socialist, and, as is clearly indicated in the program of public education for 1935,

> "The Socialist School establishes the responsibility of those who are most fitted to fight for the emancipation of the laborers, seeing to it that culture shall not be a monopoly of aristocracy or a private heritage, *employed as an instrument of domination and self-aggrandizement.*"

Under the capitalist regime culture and consequently scientific discoveries have been nothing else than means of domination and acquisition for those who have taken possession of the earth and the means of production. If Capitalism in its first stage was interested in the instruction of the masses, it was because machines required in those who operated them certain knowledge which was not necessary in the labor of the serf of the feudal age. Just for that reason we see a progress in culture which marches parallel to the development of the bourgeosie.

Likewise the needs of the oppressors in their increasing hunger for lucre make them give a gracious protection to science in so far as inventions and discoveries derived from it can be translated into material gain for the capitalists.

The development of biology in the last century and in the present was stimulated by Capitalism, especially in those aspects which serve for increasing production and consequently the possibilities of exploitation. Greedily they have waited for the biological laboratories, experiment stations, expeditions of naturalists to all corners of the globe, to discover new natural riches or means of exploiting with greater yield and less effort than those already known. Thus we see hydro-biology increasing in a fabulous way the yield of fish, and botany and genetics aided by chemistry and physics giving an impulse to agriculture, while the same genetics and zoölogy, especially in the physiological field, make possible the wonders in modern Zoötechnics. Micro-biology and entomology discover the enemies of plants and domestic animals, and indicate the manner of controlling and combatting them so as to avoid the losses which they cause.

While there are open markets, while there exists the possibility of garnering the enormous production of the seas and the lands, a strong stimulus is given to scientific investigation, causing it to reach the level which it occupies today.

However, if we examine more closely the manner in which science is fostered, we shall see that the advance which goes forward with giant strides is at the same time anarchic, chaotic, and disorganized, just as necessities of individualistic production within the capitalistic economy are anarchic, chaotic, and disorganized.

Let the moments of crisis arrive which periodically shake the capitalistic structure, such as the hard times through which we are now passing, and then scientific investigations are the first to suffer. Considered as a "luxury" in that they do not produce direct profits for those who provide their economic support, when over-production sets in these scientific investigations are curtailed through the loss of this support. And so we see, as at present, all over the world, skilled investigators without occupation, not because humanity will not benefit eventually from the results of their studies and investigations, but because the holders of wealth do not find in them prospects of the profit which prompted them formerly to support them.

What interest can there be during times of economic crisis in continuing an investigation in genetics which brings about the multiplication of a yield, when storehouses are full and there are no buyers, and in order to assure profits to the exploiters large areas are left without cultivation, while crops are burned or thrown into the ocean, as has happened more than once in the case of coffee in Brazil, although there are still millions who are too poor to buy this beverage?

Sometimes scientific investigations are not held up, but their progress becomes ironic in the face of the imperatives of the capitalistic regime based on the exploitation of human labor. Thus, for example, biology has demonstrated definitely the way of com-

batting malaria, but the peasants who continue to cultivate rice in water and mud up to their knees die annually in fabulous numbers because the great landowners do not want to decrease their profits by the cost of a campaign against the mosquito, and the pitiful wages which the laborers receive keep them from buying quinine. In the southern part of the United States, hookworm has uncountable victims every year, in spite of the fact that biologists, after studying the life cycle of the parasite, which enters principally in the organism through the bare feet, have discovered the way of preventing its attacks by simple methods of protection. The miserable inhabitants of that region, the poor whites of the South, know that shoes would be efficient protection against the attacks of the hookworm, but the conditions of poverty in which they live keep them from acquiring shoes.

Biology, like the other sciences, tends, with the practical application of the principles which its study shows us, to allow man to dominate nature to obtain from her the greatest possible benefits, as well as to indicate to him those standards which, applied to his own life, relieve him of unnecessary sufferings or hardships caused by ignorance or the mistaken application of biological principles.

And now, what is it that educational reform, preparing children of today for a more just society of a not remote future, can offer to scientific development in general and to that of biology in particular? If the present stagnation of science is due in large part, as we have just said, not to intrinsic causes in scientific development, but to the influence of absurdities and contradictions of the social regime in which we live, it is logical to hope that a new structure from which these contradictions are removed will offer new possibilities for the man of science.

The amendment to Article 3 of the constitution is not satisfied with pointing out the socialistic aim for education, which offers the greatest possibilities for future scientific development by removing obstacles placed in its way by the present decadent capitalist regime. It goes on to "exclude every religious doctrine." This in reality simply reaffirms in categorical form the non-religious character of the teaching that was already in existence in the middle of the last century, and constitutes the best guaranty for the development of the minds of children and youth.

In fact, modern science, exemplified especially in biology, has done much to take out of instruction those supposedly revealed truths which form the basis of all religious doctrines.

From his first school years the child finds himself face to face with nature, which for very practical reasons he must come to understand as broadly as possible for the sake of making his life easier and more agreeable. But the school does not and may not, according to modern educational theory, give him simply a catalogue of information concerning organic and inorganic nature, a mere memorized accumulation of disconnected notions, without trying to explain according to his capacity the how and why of natural phenomena, the relations between minerals, plants, and animals; and, especially because of its practical importance, the relation of man as an animal to the rest of the universe.

Let us suppose that we are trying to explain the variety and the unity which we observe in the vegetable and animal kingdom, concepts which at first sight appear contradictory if we do not attempt some explanation which can make a synthesis of those two apparently opposed points, variety and unity. And this explanation can be given only by the theory of evolution, accepted almost unanimously by scientists, and which we can consider as one of the greatest and most fruitful scientific generalizations. But the theory of evolution collides with supposedly revealed truths in the sacred books, and if these are taught to the child in school as the basis of whatever religious doctrine, the result will be nothing more than a great confusion in his mind which will have a most evil effect upon his intellectual development. Thus there originates a conflict between concepts which are scientific, reasoned out, based upon observation and experience, which can be discussed freely so as to verify their validity, and on the other hand the so-called religious truths, difficult to understand, which cannot be demonstrated and do not admit discussion, and which accordingly must be accepted blindly and slavishly because they are based solely upon divine authority.

This conflict between scientific conquests and religious dogmas presents itself in many scientific fields, but most of all in the biological sciences.

With regard to the relations which exist between different animals and plants of the present time, and between these and those which lived in remote times, there is for the modern biologist only one explanation possible to be taught in the schools, and this is the theory of evolution. There are very few biologists who at present, in view of the accumulation of proofs, would dare to deny the fact of the evolution through which the different species have passed through the ages; and those who adopt this position do it for reasons apart from science. But this does not mean, as the crowd erroneously interprets it, that modern evolutionists insist upon the theory of evolution as it was proposed eighty years ago by the illustrious Charles R. Darwin. The discoveries accumulated in the last three-quarters of a century have demonstrated the weak points in some of Darwin's explanations, the insufficiency of others, and notorious errors in more than one detail; and so there are few naturalists of the present day who would subscribe 100 per cent to the points of view of which Darwin, Huxley, Haeckel, and many others were the great champions. The present-day biologist is cautious in the face of certain aspects of evolution which do not submit to satisfactory explanations, and recognizes that he is ignorant to a considerable extent of the causes which may have determined them. He also recognizes the errors which some evolutionists have committed in the past because of being carried away by their ardent enthusiasm. And he is careful not to fall into them or similar ones. But he proclaims, without any vacillation, the fact of the evolution through which the species have passed and does not evade the corollary which shows man as simply a link in this endless chain of organic forms in continuous variation.

However, religious fanaticism, which sees rightly in the theory of organic evolution a formidable enemy of absurd dogmas about the creation, fights bitterly against it. The furious cam-

paign in certain of the United States some years ago, prohibiting or trying to prohibit the teaching of evolution in the public schools as contrary to "the truths contained in the Bible" is a good example of a reason for supporting the provision of the constitution that imposes upon Mexican education the obligation to combat fanaticism.

In our country districts, more thought is given to a religious procession to increase a crop than to the advice of an agronomist; and people prefer to organize prayers to stop an epidemic which is decimating their cattle, rather than call in the services of a veterinary. And the only way to combat this, by really putting science at the service of the people, is to eliminate the fanaticism accumulated through centuries of religious domination. For it is impossible to amalgamate religious beliefs with scientific theories.

We see then how the new orientation given to public education in Mexico offers the most promising perspectives for the scientific development of the future, especially in preparing a social structure less imperfect than the present one.

I have tried to explain to you what Mexican science, exemplified particularly by biology, may hope from the new orientations required in our public education. Perhaps the theme has not succeeded in interesting you, or its development has omitted aspects which you would like to know more about; but without doubt it holds interest in that it presents the problem from a new point of view, by connecting up biology with social problems.

Modern Trends in Mexico's Secondary Education

TEODORO E. SANTACRUZ

Concerning the present historic situation in which a socialistic secondary school is being evolved in Mexico, one can generalize as follows: after a decade of continuous efforts and experiences with the new educational ways, our socialistic school has at last divorced itself from the old school methods and is getting closer to the proletarian class. The old school used to teach a lofty, abstract, and verbalistic knowledge. Now we are approaching the modern type of school, less instructive and less abstract perhaps, but more practical, more active, and more inclined toward experimentation and to the application of the theories taught. In a word, we are less concerned with an accumulation of elaborate ideas than with a practical adjustment of the individual to his social environment and to the dynamic problems of the day.

You undoubtedly are aware of the fact that a large number of the proletariat draws its earnings out of the output of cultivated land, of the products of hard work in the shop, or perhaps of the few handicrafts or trades not yet invaded by an amazing mechanization. Now to get closer and closer to the laboring class, whose work—productive and socially useful—is their only wealth, the socialistic secondary school provides that the pupil shall take up courses in immediate connection with laboratories, shops, and other manual and mechanical activities. This can be achieved actually in the classrooms or elsewhere, when necessary, to the effect of gradually building up in the students a working habit which shall facilitate their gradual identification with the laboring classes. Thus the old individualistic system will be gradually replaced by the collective social system. By this means small groups of students, having already acquired certain knowledge, will be enabled to pass it on to their schoolmates, so as to place them on an equal level in instruction and educational opportunities. This way of devoting themselves by degrees to the welfare of the community, even from the schoolrooms, is perfectly fitted to the gradual banishment of the teacher's coercive authority.

Not only from books, but also from life itself, is our secondary school trying to spread scientific training, presenting it always in connection with every other branch of human knowledge. This can be achieved, of course, either in a sunlit classroom, teaching mathematics in close connection with instruments, teaching physics or chemistry with devices and through experimentation, and teaching botany and zoölogy with the help of the microscope, or under the trees close to nature, or in the factory and shop before motors and machines of all kinds—always endeavoring to convey to a collective conscience in the most efficient and practical manner every knowledge taught.

To facilitate diffusion of the new ideas and to establish a real stream to flow down to the proletarian masses, the modern secondary school not only transmits *knowledge* but teaches *how to act*—an important educational procedure, because in this way it furnishes the necessary weapons for life's struggles and provides preparation for those careers whose curricula call for a definite devotion and enthusiasm on the part of the prospective students.

To meet every necessity of this historic educational movement, the schemes of courses have been elaborated by specialists assisted by the directors of each school, each scheme being adapted to its special environment—factory, shop, market, farm, districts of natural production, etc., or any place related to ways and means of communication. This naturally leads students to identify themselves with the working classes and to grow conscious of the justice of their aspirations for an economic and spiritual emancipation.

Those among us who have been closely watching and studying these modern cultural trends trust that in the future our country shall be judged less by a few selected individuals who have sprung from its very soil than for the collective achievements which represent the development and welfare of the proletarian class.

In conclusion, the Department of Secondary Education would like to see a *training laboratory of education* created in each teaching unit as a substitute for archaic academicisms and empty speech. Such a program will bring about an era of the integral man, physically, morally, and intellectually trained and self-controlled, who will be capable of working out his abilities within the modern ways of living; who, already linked to the working classes, will coöperate to shape the future communities in the fullest development of their destinies, which *through collective efforts* will follow their own way toward a glorious goal without fear of failure from preventable handicaps.

Social Revolution in Mexico

EDWIN H. WILSON

During the rule of Porfirio Diaz (1877 to 1910) Mexico became economically colonial. By granting excessive privileges, Diaz welcomed foreign capital and enabled it to capture the major industries. He sought to make Mexico City the "Paris of America," spending money lavishly on ostentatious buildings, parks, and boulevards, but leaving the workers their unhealthy adobe dwellings, their poverty, and their ignorance. Towns of 20,000 had only two or three small schools. Rural illiteracy was as high as 85 per cent and the illiteracy of the whole nation is still as high as 59 per cent after all the efforts of the Revolution.

Conditions of rural workers that began under the Spanish occupation had survived in large measure. Under Spanish domination a peon who refused to work on the haciendas was sent to the army as a dangerous citizen. If he refused to fight he was court-martialed and shot. If he wanted to marry, his wife had to promise to work for the hacienda without charge. The large landowners had the right of private trial and punishment by torture. The Indians were kept perpetually in debt. Their wages in 1893 were 5.6 cents per day, in American money, and on the eve of the revolution of 1910 not more than 11.2 cents a day.

City workers were comparably bad off. Recent statistics show that even after nearly twenty years under the constitution of 1917 the average worker's family (5.14 persons) gets a wage of only $4.46 per week. Most of his wage, which represents the earnings of several persons, has to go for food and very little is left for housing, clothing, or culture. Many families are larger than five, many of the dwellings have no outside air, and few have running water and electricity; deplorable social and physical conditions result. A majority of the Mexicans are actually suffering from slow starvation because their diet, lacking in both quantity and balance, is composed of only eight or ten simple articles of food. Eggs are not included in their diet because "eggs are money," not food, in their economy. Clean milk is not a problem because the Mexican worker's family gets less than one liter of watered milk a week. Fruit and vegetables, needed for proper nutrition, are shunned because they mean stomach trouble. The water supply is often contaminated. There are still sections of Mexico City without sewers. The high rate of death due to intestinal disorders can be traced to lack of facilities for properly cleaning and cooking food which has been grown and marketed in unsanitary manner. Due to primitive agricultural methods there is not food enough grown in the whole country to feed the Mexican people. The economic causes of revolution are everywhere obvious.

After several turbulent presidencies the Revolutionary National Party (P. N. R.) was developed with every member of the Labor Union a member of the P. N. R. In 1934 Lazaro Cardenas was elected President and stable government established. Under this capable and sincere man there has come a break with the Mexican political tradition of office-holding for purposes of plunder. Talk of Socialism and Revolution ceases to be a cloak for exploitation and becomes the active ideology of a real revolution.

The progress of this Mexican revolution includes the following achievements sanctioned by the constitution of 1917:

(1) 12,000 rural schools have been established. These schools are teaching Mexican youth how to organize coöperatives, breed stock, build chicken coops and pig-pens, raise and cook food, and sew, as well as to read and to write. These schools are cultural centers, teaching the evolutionary world view of man, inculcating revolutionary principles of class struggle and soldier-farmer-labor solidarity, perpetuating the old arts, crafts, and fiestas but using them creatively to develop national pride and to dramatize social change. The schools are also health centers, developing an awareness of the requirements of sanitation, uprooting superstitions, employing preventive medicine when possible. But 28,000 more schools are needed, as are great quantities of text books and trained teachers.

(2) A six-year plan to increase the arability of the nation to 12 per cent (it is estimated that 20 per cent arability is the possible maximum) is under way with 125 major projects including coast to coast highways and three great dams for purposes of irrigation.

(3) A rapidly realized plan to redistribute land to Indian communities organized on a coöperative basis is well under way. In breaking up the haciendas the government began with those lands which had clearly been taken from original Indian communities but is proceeding to divide all large landholdings including those of the church. Bonds of uncertain value have been issued in payment for distributed areas.

(4) Labor organization, utilizing the industrial union plan, has progressed rapidly, with the approval and coöperation of the government. Without technical ability, without Mexican owned capital and an adequate supply of raw materials, actual socialization of the major industries cannot proceed. It will take time to secure these. Always, there is the danger of foreign intervention, so stress has been laid upon improving hours and wages under private ownership. In the electrical strike of last summer, when all light and power were denied a city of a million for eight days, there was no disorder and the workers were granted their demands for a share of the 1935 profits, a new wage agreement, and the extension of the union to include office workers. Only the provision that accountants be included in the union was placed in arbitration. The strike showed the Mexicans the degree of their dependency upon foreign capital because the city waited in darkness for days while bondholders in Toronto, Brussels, and London came to terms.

(5) Living and social conditions of the city workers have been improved by the building of workers' colonies, by the establishment of day schools with medical attention for children, by a program of sports to further the worker's morale and health, and by a humanizing of the penal system.

This "revolution by education" under the leadership of a working President who travels into the tiniest village with his corps of experts and soldiers will succeed if President Cardenas can keep self-seeking politicians from rising to power, and if the foreign investors keep their hands off. Because this effort for freedom and well-being on the part of our neighbor can be checked by propaganda-inspired American intervention, Mexico needs to be understood and defended by American friends.

The Revolutionary Function of Art

DIEGO RIVERA

The Marxists say that art always expresses the character of the society that produces it in a definite period, and that the class in power during this time always tries to use art as a means of domination, as well as a weapon in the class struggle. Naturally the revolutionary artists are in the minority in the history of art, though invariably they are greater and stronger than the non-revolutionists. This is not because of any revolutionary mysticism; nor is it a distortion of history by Marxists. To confirm this postulate, it is sufficient to examine the personalities that make up the history of art and to recognize the characteristics of the environment in which they worked. In the technical field of art, the reason for the superiority of these exceptional artists consists in the fact that their rebellious revolutionary attitudes permitted them to observe and follow life more closely, and to feel life more profoundly than the artists influenced by the ruling class. This is undeniable not only with respect to the past but to the present.

It is not, then, that the Marxists condemn as false art that is not revolutionary. They limit themselves to proving by historical experience, and by living facts which are the works of art, that revolutionary art was and is better and will be better in all times than the non-revolutionary. The bourgeoisie use art as a means of prolonging their power, hence it is natural that the Marxists should attack that art by criticism and every possible means serving the revolutionary proletarian point of view. This is part of the class struggle. The revolutionary proletariat cannot have ethics or esthetics, if it is possible to use these terms, other than in this position. All is good and useful that serves the revolution and all is bad that reacts or is used against it. But the technically deficient work of art, of inferior quality, is not useful to the revolution, even though its author may have the best revolutionary intentions and know Marx's theories correctly. That work of art, being inferior, will have no power over those who see it. Failing to give the pleasure that is considered a fundamental part of its function, it will not be able to communicate the content useful to the revolution.

The pagan Greek and Roman art was as much propaganda as the Christian art that followed it, for it imposed on the multitude, by means of images and architectural styles, the theogonies of that time, or sanctified the heroes who had been useful to the maintenance of the then reigning social order.

Christian art had different appearances according to the class position of those who used Christianity during the course of history. At the beginning there was the revolutionary theory of the masses of slaves in rebellion, which had a character in accord with the class employing it. The Christian art of the catacombs is infinitely superior in beauty to the decadent Greco-Roman art that preceded it, and although it may have used, as was natural within the dialectics of history, the symbols and technical processes employed by pagan art, a new significance was given. Rarely in the history of humanity has there been art of such force and feeling as that of the primitive Christians.

Later, when Christianity failed in its rebellion of the slaves because of not having known how to organize itself in armed rebellion, it adopted the tactics of folded arms and passive resistance. This was capitalized by the aristocracy to consolidate the feudal order of the Middle Ages. Christian art took on the hierarchical rigidity of that society and was entirely at the service of the aristocracy. But there is no one who would deny the magnificent beauty of the mosaics of Rome or of the Byzantine empire, or the beauty of the Roman and Gothic art—both emanations of the Byzantine. Yet all of this maintains itself within rigid and religious patterns, and it is only at the birth of the bourgeosie toward the end of the Middle Ages that there appears a revivifying net in European art. In Italy the Christian painters became more observant of reality and injected real life into their works that were used by the rising bourgeosie—the artisans, the peasants—against the politico-theocratical and papal aristocracy reigning in Italy.

And thanks to this struggle there appeared in the countries where the bourgeosie was more developed, as in Holland, Flanders, and the free cities of Germany, a new type of art that was no longer religious. Thus appeared the art of genre and landscapes.

Later when the bourgeosie in its struggle against the aristocracy needed a new type of Christian belief, it introduced into Christianity free examination; and the Protestant Reform movement was born, influencing also, in the countries that it dominated, the liquidation of religious iconography and the birth of realistic painting. Later, with the triumph of the bourgeosie in the French Revolution, the realistic revolutionary character was accentuated with Chardin and David, opposing Classicism and favoring Monarchical Barroquism, when the seeds of Bonapartism were sprouting. We find a weakening and degeneration of art during the reign of Napoleon but later, after the commotions of the years 1830 and 1840, came the marvelous period of French art of the nineteenth century, which culminated with Impressionism and Neo-Impressionism at the height of the development of the bourgeosie, and declined from then on.

During this development there were great anonymous artists of the catacombs: Iotto and his master collaborators, Orcagna and many others of the same mental pattern. Like them were Grunewald, the plastifier of pain, Bruegel, the Elder, Jerome Bosch, Vermeer de Delft, Rembrandt, Tintoretto, El Greco, Chardin, Goya, David, Daumier, Courbet, Cézanne, Renoir, Seurat, Rousseau who occupied, socially speaking, a revolutionary class-position and undoubtedly, with many others of their kind, represented the highest artistic values.

The Christian artist of the catacombs was not a slave of the Chritian faith, but rather a slave of the pagan aristocracy, in rebellion against it; that is to say, a revolutionary. The Christian artists of a later period likewise were not slaves of a faith, as Thomas Benton says, but servants of the aristocratic class in power, paid servants and at times very well paid, for in those days works of art were a very important means of capitalization and their possession represented the maximum of power and comfort. These artists, whose works have no revolutionary value, were servants later of the bourgeosie when they came into power.

Serving the revolution—that is, human progress—does not diminish the perennial value that the work of

art has in human life but exalts it, for the revolutionary character is not imposed on the work of art by any authority, as Benton states, rather it emanates from the very free consciousness of the revolutionary artist.

The erroneous tactics and occasional ridiculous utterances and acts of the official Stalinist-Communist party in the United States and in many other parts of the world, including the Soviet Union, do not invalidate in the least the former truths and the consequences deriving from them. The erroneous position of the Stalinists depends precisely on the fact that they, like their chief, Stalin, are bad Marxists. The mistakes that this precipitates should not be confounded with the real comprehension of the social role of art on the part of the Marxist-Leninists, the only upholders of the true revolutionary line.

It is incorrect to say that art can be separated from a thing that is not doctrine—such as the class struggle, since this is life itself and nothing can exist aside from it.

Esthetic forms change, precisely contrary to what Benton assures, through the intention of the artist and through the concept and the comprehension that he has of the visible world and of his personal psychological world. For example: compare a tree painted by a pagan Greek to a tree painted by a primitive Christian, this to another painted by a Christian artist of the Middle Ages, this to another by a painter of the Renaissance, this to one by an Impressionistic artist, and, finally, to one constructed with accents of light by a Neo-Impressionist. You will be able to read in this succession of "aspects of the living world which the artist experiences and which he tries to express," as in a book, the evolution not of the aspect of the living world—which in this case is the tree that remains the same from the time of Pericles to the present time of Benton—but the evolution of the manner in which man comprehends this living world. Because of this, the art of American artists will achieve originality not because of the objects or aspects of the living world peculiar to America, which the artist may try to experience and to express, but only when he conceives, believes within himself, and feels in his nerves a new way of seeing, of experiencing, of expressing the outer world.

The art produced in America, since there is as yet no American art unless it is that of the natives previous to the conquest, or the mestizo art well rooted and adapted to the physical and psychological environment in American countries of Spanish origin and especially Mexico, need have no fear of seeing itself enslaved by "Marxian doctrine," since only in case of the degeneration of the organizations historically charged with carrying out the revolutionary Marxian struggle could art standardize itself. This phenomenon can happen once or many times during the development of the social revolution but at the end of it there will be a society without classes, and then art, far from standardizing its symbols, as Benton says, will need no more of them, there being no longer any class in power which may impose its form upon it. Finally, art will begin to be freely human, and only then will it surely surpass in beauty the art of the primitive classless society of the caves, the rupestre art, whose vitality, veracity, and beauty have never been surpassed in any period of history. And the only human attitude in which reason is not enslaved but free, and judgment is not deformed, is that of the Marxist-Leninist. Therefore, the art produced by him is and always will be superior to any production of the inert bourgeois purists, of the false Communists, the intellectual lackeys of Stalin, of the demagogues in the service of governments that try to deceive the proletariat and the peasantry, and of the dynamic Fascist "democrats" of convenience.

The Last Puritanism

An Appraisal of the Oxford Group Movement

HUGH STEVENSON TIGNER

PART II

But when we come to rendering an unequivocal judgment upon it, Buchmanism is in a strongly defended position. It is in the position of Saint James, who said: "Show me your faith without any good deeds, and I will show you my faith by my good deeds." This is a thick fortification for a representative of organized religion to attack, for organized religion has not any compelling trophies of recent taking to show. Buchmanism has: it works!

Buchmanism's presumptuous faith is buttressed by its accomplishments. Like all fervent faiths, it claims more victories than it can substantiate; but it has scored some resounding victories. Dr. Buchman has brought forth from the depths of his neurotic genius a formula that can clean out many a troubling sin and fill spiritual vacuums. It has taken an impressive number of Junior Leaguers, whose existence was not sufficiently bolstered up by dainty dabblings in social service, and pumped a glowing meaning into their lives. It has transformed the irritated and inconsiderate into sweeter and more coöperative characters. It has brought a new unity into homes formerly torn apart by riotous egoism. It has dashed cold water on a lot of adultery, and sobered the besotted. It has caught hold of youths chasing hysterically after sensual delights and oriented them around more stable values. It has overcome many a future Babbitt in the Joe College stage of development, lifted him out of his cynicism and dissoluteness, and infected him with the piety and self-respect proper to the position that he will soon take in his community. It has taken bankers, brokers, salesmen, executives, members of parliament, and advertising men out of the corrosive atmosphere of self-seeking, corrected their more flagrant forms of skinning the other fellow, and given them a fresh, clean feeling of moral wholesomeness—something which the Rotary and Kiwanis clubs tried to do and could not. It has taken tottering individuals in an age of tottering individualism, given them God's guidance in place of their own frazzled powers, and made them feel that the force of the universe is back of them. It has converted religion from a languishing theory into a thriving reality.

I can add to this evidence some testimony of my own. I confess to having read with profit three volumes of Buchmanism's repetitious lore. I was not nearly so conscience-smitten by this as I was by Santayana's *The Last Puritan,* but I had to assent to the truth of many of its insights, and admit that it dealt cannily with some genuine realities. For instance, I am im-

pressed with the value of "quiet times," though I think it a limited value very much dependent upon the quality of the individual's spiritual equipment, and I regard the official interpretation of the practice as an insidious piece of humbug. Again, I felt myself and the religious tradition I represent convicted of incompetence when I observed Buchmanism's ability to put practical punch into many professed beliefs.

But Buchanism is not to be appraised upon its own terms or within its own limits any more than it is to be understood in the dim light of its own muddy mysticism. Whether or not it holds the solution to our spiritual predicament depends upon whether or not it goes to the bottom of that predicament or takes in enough territory to include the whole of the predicament. The fact that it provides a saving tonic for a number of scattered individuals, the majority of whom are suspected of falling within a narrow psychological category and who without doubt do fall within a narrow economic category—this fact does not in any sense mean that Buchmanism holds a way out for our harassed world or contains the germ of a new epoch. Buchmanism is to be judged by its function in the social organism. It is to be evaluated against the background of an historical situation, of a cultural crisis. To judge it otherwise is to judge it without perspective.

When viewed against this background, Buchmanism is sharply etched. It is seen as performing the same service in the realm of the spirit that Fascism performs in the realm of economics. Just as Fascism abolishes democratic discussion and declares a political dictatorship, so Buchmanism denies the right to reason and establishes a spiritual dictatorship. Frank and Benito are equally imperious in their respective spheres. The former has one true diagnosis and prescription for all spiritual ills. Every one must fit into it, or remain sunk in sin. To question it or argue about it is simply treason to the Holy Ghost. Wherever Dr. Buchman's associates have disagreed with him or doubted the infallibility of his judgment, there has been a sharp rift. Only in recent years when he has been surrounded with like-minded acolytes have his personal relations been free from tropical hurricanes. As for the Groupers themselves, nothing but a stung conscience ever opposes them. Those who seek to "let down" a house-party instead of "bucking" it up are usually guilty of embezzlement or of kissing somebody else's wife in the dark. The claim of "parallelism" ("We are running on similar lines") is a dishonest excuse. "It is not," says one of the apostles, "that the Group has one method and the others have other methods. Either we are living the maximum experience of Christ or not."

Just as Fascism is a Neo-Capitalism, so is Buchmanism a Neo-Puritanism, salvaging only the essentials, blotting out the stale old flavors and adding fresh peppery spices of its own. On the surface, Puritanism would not recognize itself in Buchmanism. Gone is the once-sturdy intellectual framework. Gone are the liturgy, the sermon, the doctrinal disquisition, the parson, the Sabbath order of comportment, the humbling vision of a transcendent God, the pessimistic appreciation of this world's ineradicable evil, the dignified reserve, the stern posture, and the intense concentration upon the practical task at hand as man's proper method for glorifying God and walking in his ways. Gone, in other words, is the solid old system in which the Puritan solemnly knew himself to be a laborer in the Lord's vineyard. These gay gatherings at the Waldorf-Astoria; this jaunty piety; this sending out of "flying squads" of Christian minute-men to attack a citadel of sin, pausing a few blocks away to hold a "deadly quiet time," and thus making a game out of religion; all these wise-cracking, prank-playing saints; this living ostentatiously on prayer, and treating God like a suppliant millionaire grandfather; this exuberant college-spirit evangelism, would shock the ancestral Puritan as being scandalous. But just a minute! Let him look beneath this profligate style. Let him consider the gist and not the form, and I can see a wide smile of approval dividing the face of his ghost.

Puritanism, if I may speak with the roughest simplicity, was the answer to a merchant's prayer. Without deliberately intending to do so, it contributed the moral weapons needed by the rising middle-class to fight their way to hegemony in the modern epoch. It aided and approved, though it did not instigate, the destruction of the medieval religio-social restraints upon economic activities. It justified the individual in repudiating all authority save the authority of God speaking to the private conscience. Abrogating social discipline, it founded a discipline of its own calculated to make the individual diligent, sober, thrifty, honest, temperate, self-reliant, patient, and intensely persevering. It removed the classic aroma of sordidness from trade, making it one of God's "calling," and dignified all secular toil, lifting worldly success from an evidence of greed to a sign of character. As R. H. Tawney expresses it, Puritanism heightened the virtues of the bourgeoisie, "sanctified, without eradicating, their convenient vices, and gave them an inexpungable assurance that behind virtues and vices alike stood the majestic and inexorable laws of an omnipotent Providence." It armed them with a set of qualities and limitations which made them "irresistible both in war and in the struggles of commerce." In brief, it covered with piety and divine approval those values, practices, and principles essential to an order of individualism in economics, politics, morals, and religion.

Buchmanism is manifestly a legitimate successor in this spiritual dynasty. True, it resorts to extremities that Puritanism would have disdained; but the empire it has inherited is not in as sound a condition as was once the case. In its heyday, Puritanism was supported by the natural momentum of social forces: God's providence was everywhere apparent and on every side accessible. Today, when destiny seems to have changed its course, one has to tune-in through a lot of static in order to discover the cosmic purpose.

Puritanism could be content with making men merely God's stewards; but that is too mild for the present situation: Buchmanism turns out saints. I suspect that the term "saint" is applied more times in one volume of the Groupers' lore than in all the hagiography of the Roman Catholic Church put together. Again, Puritanism could afford a humbling sense of relativity between man and God. God was not without his testimonies in the world, and so was immanent; but he was also splendidly and unapproachably transcendent. This earthly order was not an altogether bad place in which to win transitory rewards, when in an impious moment one considered it from that standpoint; but from a high spiritual perspective it was little better than a rotting carcass. Of course, such a glaring contrast is endurable only when one has a powerful assurance of grace. The elder Puritan had this assurance; his descendants do not. Therefore, Buchmanism is required to wipe out this contrast. God's perfection and glory are not hopelessly transcendent, but potentially immanent: they can

be brought down and incorporated in the dust. Man, by following the right formula, can become an unhampered agent of the Holy Spirit. Modestly enough, no single Grouper may claim to know the whole of God's plan for the race of men; but he is directly shown his part in that plan from day to day, so this ignorance is no obstacle to the pure functioning of the Divine Will through him. Frank presumes to make men "absolutely for the absolute." A thousand Christs, ten thousand, a whole blooming world full of them, are envisioned.

Finally, where Puritanism merely legitimized the individual's pursuit of success and applauded it when won, Buchmanism appears as a patent success-recipe. It does not promise to make every one a millionaire; but it is guaranteed to bring home the bacon requisite to a comfortable existence. "Where God guides He provides," is a Grouper maxim. As to how it works out, let V. C. Kitchen, who "was a pagan" and still is an advertising man, tell us.

The change from a "self-determining V. C. Kitchen" to a Christ-directed one, was coming over him on a trip to New Haven, where he had some advertising business with a munitions firm. He cut out smoking on the way, and found such a new interest in his work as he discussed his copy with his client, that he overstayed and missed the train back to New York. But no sooner had he finished eating supper at the station than a train-announcer came up to him and said, "There's a New York train just ready to leave. It's the train you missed. It broke down in West Haven and just backed up into this station." Kitchen smiled. "It seemed, in fact, almost as if, in recompense for the extra time I had given myself, God had spared me the annoyance of boarding that train, had given me opportunity to enjoy a comfortable supper, and then saw to it that I had no further time to wait before resuming my journey." (This may strike the unkindly critic as an illustration of megalomania, of a colossal egocentric callousness toward other people's troubles—the troubles of train crews, for instance. Or it may stir the philosophically-minded to wonder if God loves munitions manufacturers so well that he thinks any extra service rendered them should receive extra compensation. But if you are charitable and unphilosophic, you will allow me to use it in the success sense.)

This remarkable experience ought to have converted an ordinary man, but Kitchen, by his own admission, was stewed in corruption, and it merely induced him to attend a house-party at Briarcliff. Before long he was ready to quit saying, "I am the master of my fate," and say instead, "Thine is the kingdom and the power." Then he wrote out a check to his partner for the amount he had chiseled from him. But God saw to it that this cost Kitchen nothing, for he was directed to a check that had been folded up, laid away and forgotten, which covered this restitution to the exact penny. God was beginning to look after Kitchen in a handsome way. He guided him to make an investment that no rational person would have thought worth a fig, but which turned out to be richly rewarding. Now, in complete dependence upon God, he no longer has to worry. God tells him what letters to write, what calls to make and what calls not to make, thus saving him from wasting energy in unfruitful pursuits. "And when I began to apply Christ in my business," he says, "business men came up to say—not 'What a splendid advertisement!' but 'How did you get that way?' and 'How can I get that way myself?'" With the result that "several other advertising men and a number of business men in other lines" have been led to a personal experience of Christ.

Kitchen's office has now become a spiritual powerhouse where "two members of the New York Stock Exchange, a real estate broker, an oil and gas prospector, an engineer, a banker, an automotive man, a noted international lawyer, the head of a travel bureau, and an efficiency management expert" meet together each week to have their batteries charged. This is not a conspiracy of hard-pressed pirates, nothing akin to the old robber-baron conferences that Matthew Josephson tells about, but a surrender to "the great economist, Jesus Christ." After the great shake-down of 1929, realizing with Jeremiah that "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps," these men now discuss their business problems as God has directed them. Only "the Great Co-Ordinator Himself" can keep "some 7,000 trades and industries in this country and many more throughout the world" working together for good.

If this causes one to think it strange that men ever made successes before Buchman brought the light, the reason for making failures is far from obscure. It is explained in the following insight with which Kitchen became invested: "the really charitable thing to do for a hungry man is to get down to the sin which is blocking him from God and thus blocking him from the knowledge of the plan by which God means him to make a living." That will stand reflection. It is a synthesis of economics, ethics, politics, and religion that Thomas Aquinas might envy.

The Oxford Group Movement, you see, is a vulgar Puritanism. It is a cornered Puritanism showing its teeth in an ugly snarl. It has all the vices of Puritanism, few of the virtues, and none of the graces. But it is Neo-Puritanism, for its intentions are to save the order of individualism. These intentions exist, of course, well below the neck. Buchmanism is not conscious of such organic realities as social orders. But its import is so unmistakable that, if the Liberty League had the brains to match its bank account, it would have invested in the unpolitical Pennsylvania Dutchman, Frank Buchman, rather than in 'Gene Talmadge, the ambitious Governor of Georgia.

Buchmanism supplies fresh force to the conventional morality, and makes no indictment or attack that need worry a single institution, except possibly the Protestant churches, who are having their distant thunder dimmed by this close-hitting lightning. Institutions are ignored as having no reality. They are legal or grammatical fictions. The individual is everything. All evil is personal, and world regeneration can be brought about only through producing "Spirit-filled" men and women. It is perhaps significant that both Russell and Kitchen, along with Father Coughlin, go out of their way to show the error of collectivism.

A new piety is furnished to business enterprise: it can now be carried on in absolute honesty, purity, unselfishness, and love under the direct and immediate guidance of God. If I am not misinformed, this is something new in history. Puritanism came close to it, and for all practical purposes accomplished the same thing; but I am not aware of the doctrine ever having been stated before in such unadulterated form. Nowadays, if an advertising man or a munitions manufacturer or a journalist or a Hollywood actress feels any vague moral repulsions or indescribable emptiness about the business to which he devotes his life, all he (or she) has to do is to become an Oxford Group saint. Kitchen found advertising under his own banner spiritually un-

satisfying, but under Christ's banner, with his life surrendered to God "wholly and without reserve," he found himself "open to and refreshed by the kind of fun you find in God's approval." It has never occurred to the Groupers that self-approval and God's approval are apt to become identical when the absolute is so easy of realization, and when there is no transcendent vision of God to indict man for his relativity.

Buchmanism is as effective a technique for self-deception as was ever devised. It has the power to make persons morally respectable, yes, and to produce integrity on a conventional level of virtue; but then by pouring on these persons the illusion of perfection or quasi-perfection it turns them into invulnerable hypocrites. An Oxford professor, who has observed with sympathy the work of Buchmanism there for over ten years, says that its first effect upon most any life seems to be helpful and desirable; but that long association with the Groups nearly always results in deplorable qualities of spiritual pride, narrowness, hypersensitiveness, and self-concern. This would be the inevitable consequence even if Buchmanism did not tend to select the introspective, the hypersensitive, the wrought-up, and the domineering. For it has the smallest range of vision and the pettiest conception of deity (so petty that it can hardly be called a conception) of any religious movement in my knowledge. It is probably the most degenerate form of religious expression that ever adopted the Christian name.

It is my judgment that, from a very near-sighted and fragmentary point of view, Buchmanism has some clinical value. But its virtues are so counter-balanced by its vices and so obliterated by its deficiencies; the odor of cultural decay emanates so pungently from it, that I regard its pretenses toward constituting or bringing about a spiritual revival as counterfeit and bumptious.

[*Concluded*]

My Russian Impressions*

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

Translated from the Original Bengali by Basanta Koomar Roy

Copyright, 1937, by Basanta Koomar Roy

Author of "Rabindranath Tagore: The Man and His Poetry"

IV

I wrote two letters to you from Moscow regarding the Soviet System. I do not know when you will get those letters; or if you will get them at all.

Upon my return to Berlin I have received two letters together from you. Your letters were written in the depth of the rainy season. It is not necessary for me to tell you how anxious I become to return home when I think of the picture of the shadows of the clouds on the *sal* trees, and of the rainfall on the plains of Bolpur. But ever since my return from Russia even the picture of that beauty at Bolpur has been wiped out of my mind. I am constantly thinking of the widespread sorrows of the farmers of my country. From the beginning of my youth I have been in close contact with the villages of Bengal. I was always surrounded with the farmers of the land. I was the custodian of all their complaints in life. They are about the most helpless people on earth. The light of knowledge scarcely reaches, and the breath of life seldom blows, in the lower depths of human society in which they dwell.

There was not one among our pompous political leaders of those days who even looked upon the farmer as belonging to the land of his birth. I remember that during the Pabna political conference I told a great political leader of India that if we want the real political progress of our country, then first of all we shall have to make men out of these farmers that grovel in the dust. He simply scoffed at the idea in such a way that it became plain to me that the politicians of our land only learned a few lessons in politics in the foreign schools; but they failed miserably to realize in their own hearts the need of manhood in the underdogs.

The advantage of such a mentality is that we definitely know that our country is being owned, controlled, and ruled by aliens. We can feel sorry about it; we can get excited over it; we can write poems on it; we can run newspapers to ventilate our grievances; but the moment we admit that the masses of our land are our very own, a grave responsibility is acknowledged, and an uphill work automatically begins.

Many a year has passed since those days. I have often heard echoes of what I said about the villages of India as the President of the Pabna Conference. Not only talk—our leaders have even raised public funds for the improvement of the villages; but those funds were lost in the whirlpools of words of the upper classes; and they never reached their destination in the lower depths of our society in the villages.

Once I was wont to serve literature living on a house-boat on the river Padma. I was under the impression then that my only duty was to dig the mines of thought with my pen. I was not fit for any other work. But when I failed to make any one understand that the center of self-government was in the farming villages, and that the work for their improvement must start immediately, then I set my pen aside and was forced to say: "Well, then I myself will do this work." And I found only one man to help me in this endeavor —and that was Kalimohan. He was reduced to a mere skeleton with constant fever. And again, he was a political suspect. His name was registered in the precious books of the police.

Since those days history has been travelling with utmost difficulty over rough roads in India. It was my intention to make the farmer powerful in his own strength. In this connection two problems have ever presented themselves before my mind. First, morally speaking, the land belongs not to the landlord, but to the farmer. Secondly, the farmer can never improve his condition but through coöperative farming. The old-fashioned farming of tiny little farms by individual farmers is like carrying water in a broken pitcher.

Please remember that the rule of the Czar ended in Russia in 1917—only thirteen years ago. In the meantime the Russians have to fight their way through tremendous opposition both from the inside and outside. They are alone, burdened with a heavy load of broken statecraft. The road is hard-travelling, for it is strewn with broken fragments of former misrule. Both America and England, openly and secretly, helped

*Written in the period of 1930.—EDITORS.

Russia cross the river of the new age against a terrific storm. The Russians have little money. They have no credit abroad. For lack of proper supply of machinery, they are unable to produce wealth. So they have to sell their very food to carry on their work and enterprise. And yet the waste of keeping an army in efficiency is inevitable for them. For all the strength of the great powers of the world are focused against them. And these powerful nations are armed to the teeth; and the armories and arsenals of these nations are full to the brim.

Perhaps you remember how Russia startled the minds of the counterfeit peace-makers of the League of Nations with their most radical proposals for disarmament. The aim of Soviet Russia is neither the enhancement nor the preservation of its own power. Her aim is rather to efficiently build up and strengthen the ways and the means for the spread of popular education, the knowledge of public health, and the equitable distribution of food. In order to be able to accomplish all these she needs undisturbed peace more than any other nation on earth. But you know that all the wrestlers of the League of Nations are not at all willing to put an end to their extensive endeavors for armed rowdyism; and yet they conjointly shout loudly for world peace. That is the reason why in all the imperialistic nations the cultivation of the thorny wilderness of arms and ammunition far exceeds the cultivation of the farms for crops and cattle.

In the meantime Russia suffered from a terrible famine for a while. There is no knowing how many people died of starvation. It was certainly a tremendous strain on Russia to overcome the effects of that terrible famine. Since then Russia has been able for eight years, without the help of others, to engage fully in the task of building the new age.

It is certainly not an easy task. Russia extends over a vast area both in Europe and in Asia. The citizens of Soviet Russia are of more varied racial types than even those of India. The types of races are as varied as the types of land in Soviet Russia. Really, Russia's problems embrace countless races and diverse conditions. Russia is indeed a world in miniature.

I wrote to you before that, when I first entered this country, Moscow did not look very neat compared to other rich capitals of Europe. You cannot find a single soul on the streets in costly dresses. The entire city is dressed in everyday clothes. Ordinary clothes admit of no class distinction. Class distinction is based on difference in clothes. Here everybody dresses alike. The entire city is a city of workers. Wherever I look I see no one else but workers. Here in Russia you do not have to go to the library to study books, or to the villages or to the slums to take notes in order to study the condition of the farmers and the workers. The question to ask here is: "Where are the so-called 'gentlemen'?"

The masses of Russia live no more in the dark shadows of the so-called gentlemen. Those that were hidden behind the curtain are now fully in the forefront of society. It did not take me long to disillusionize myself of the idea that the masses here have just learned to read the first or the second reader. It is not a question of reading and writing at all. Just within a few short years the ignorant masses have become full-fledged human beings.

I cannot help thinking of the farmers and the workers of my own country. It seems that the magicians of the Arabian Nights have been at work in Russia. About two years ago the farmers and the workers of Russia were just as illiterate, just as helpless, just as famine-stricken, just as superstitious, and just as ignorantly religious as the farmers and the workers of India. In sorrow and in danger the masses of Russia were wont to supplicate before their saints in the churches; in fear of punishment in the next world they mortgaged their intelligence to their religious leaders; and in fear of punishment in this world they mortgaged their intelligence to their rulers, their money-lenders, and their landlords. Their duty was to polish the very boots with which they were kicked by their masters. They knew no change in their way of life for a thousand years. They had their same old carriages, the same ancient spinning wheels, the same old oil presses. They revolted at the very sight of modern machinery. As in the case of the 300,000,000 people of India, the nightmare of the past kept the eyes of the Russian masses closed tight. In these few years they have moved the mountain of the inertia of ignorance in such a way that it cannot fail to impress the unlucky people of India. And yet, during those years of great changes, Russia knew nothing of the "Law and Order" as it prevails in British India.

I have told you before that one has not to go far to study their system of education. One evening I went to a farmers' home in Moscow. This home is reserved for the farmers who come to the city for a short stay on certain occasions. I talked with the residents of the house. When we shall be able to carry on such conversations with the farmers of our land, then, and then alone, we shall be able to fittingly reply to the report of the Simon commission.

It is now quite evident to me that everything could have happened to India; but nothing did. But that does not matter—we have the British "Law and Order." The tale of our Hindu-Moslem quarrels is spread all over the world by interested parties. Here, too, in olden days, the Christians fought with the Jews most barbarously. But education and good government have banished such communal quarrels from Russia forever. I am thinking quite often that Mr. Simon and his commission should have visited Soviet Russia before going to India.

Instead of writing just a genteel letter to a lady like you, why do I write such a letter? While seeking the cause, you will discover how profoundly agitated I have been over the state of affairs in India. I suffered much restlessness once before—and that was after the Amritsar massacre. After the recent Dacca disturbances I am again suffering similarly. The British government has whitewashed its Dacca atrocities; but every student of politics knows the value of such whitewashing. If such things happened in Soviet Russia, then no amount of whitewashing would have washed away the disgrace thereof.

Sudhindra was never and in no way interested in political agitation in India. Even he has written me such a letter that it is quite evident that contempt for the British system of administration in India has reached enormous proportions.

This letter remains incomplete. Both paper and time have come to an end. In my next letter I shall complete the incomplete parts of this letter.

[*To be continued*]

The Study Table

Spanish-Indian Relationships

MITLA: TOWN OF THE SOULS. *By Elsie Clews Parsons. 590 pp. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. $4.00.*

Dr. Elsie Clews Parsons spent two years in the town of Mitla, studying the Zapotecan people, their cultural background and habits. The study concerns itself with the Spanish and Indian cultural influences current at the present day. The result is a painstaking study, approximating six hundred pages.

Mitla is of special interest because of its location. It is a center between the remote mountain towns and modern civilization. It lies at the head of the valley, east of the city of Oaxaca.

People interested in Mexico know Mitla for its ancient and magnificent ruins of architectural and sculptural wonders. The subterranean palaces of Mitla and the surrounding buildings are believed to be the burial places of the ancient Zapotecan kings. Mitla has always attracted people—pilgrims, in the pre-conquest days, by its religious importance; and tourists, Mexican and foreign, at the present time, for its aesthetic and archeological significance.

Previous to the publication of this book, there was little authentic data concerning the cultural background which so strongly influences the life of the people. Dr. Parsons, well equipped with a wide acquaintance of Indian lore, evident in her many references and footnotes, has collected a wealth of first-hand material which will lead to further understanding of this marvelous region.

The material of the book is divided into the following chapters: Town and Population, Economic Life, Family and Personal Life, Government, Religion, Calendar, Shrines and Rites, Lores and Tales, Los Serranos, Town Gossip, Indian or Spanish, and an appendix. Illustrated with photographs taken by the author, and with drawings and maps made by her Indian guide and advisor, Eligio Santiago, the picture of the personality of the Mitlayeno and the region is fully drawn.

The first records of Mitla, Dr. Parsons shows, date from about the middle of the fifteenth century, when the Aztecs invaded the Zapotecan territory and subdued the inhabitants. But very little is known about the later history of the town and its population, or the changes of the location and the early structure of the church.

Oaxaca in general builded slowly; in 1544 it had barely thirty Spanish settlers. Of the early history of the inhabitants of the state of Oaxaca, the Spanish chroniclers have little to say.

When Dr. Parsons began her study of Mitla, the town already had the use of the new road from Oaxaca, upon which, along with ancient transportation such as burros and men carrying goods on their backs, she found busses, trucks, and motor cars. We remember the old road, in 1926, from Oaxaca to Mitla, where only horse and bullock carts and burros could travel. Then it took about two days to reach Mitla from Oaxaca. The trip can be made now in a few hours. This road affects the town in many ways. More factory goods are sold; new improvements are brought to town. The mill where the corn for tortillas is ground is a modern improvement introduced to Mitla lately. By the use of machinery the work of several hours is accomplished in a few minutes. Advertising a new brand of cigarettes, a loud speaker with jazz music was heard on Market Day for the first time in Mitla. The townspeople and especially the people from the mountain villages are witnessing changes which eclipse centuries.

The occupation of the people consists of commerce, travel, and small handicrafts; but everybody is tied to the land in one way or another. The large landowners—Don Luis, Victor Olivero, and the Quero family—own most of the arable land. One may rent land and work on shares, but this does not satisfy the people. Dr. Parsons heard "strong condemnation" by the people, not so much against the acquisition of the land, but against the manner in which the land was acquired—through loans at exorbitant rates of interest and foreclosures of mortgages. There is little irrigation in the valley, and the water supply also is monopolized by the well-to-do families.

In Mitla, in contrast to Dr. Robert Redfield's *Tepoztlan,* the author found no such classification as "Los Correctos" and "Los Tonots"—the right and the ignorant. All consider themselves Indians. The classification is "Los Ricos" and "Los Pobres"—the rich and the poor.

There is no apology for being Indian; but the "Mixes," the mountain dwellers of Mixteca villages, in their intercourse with the Zapotecan people, do refer to themselves in apologetic tones for their not knowing Spanish or Zapotecan as "Somos Mixes." "We are Mixes"—"What more could you expect from us?" The Mitlayenos, in contrast to the retiring and shut-in mountain people, are very frank and open.

Government, Religion, and Calendar—the yearly round of fiestas—seem to be inseparable. The officials of the town are elected each year and are obliged to serve without remuneration. The service starts when one becomes about fifteen years old, and during a lifetime he can serve in a series of offices up to the "presidente municipal." Along with the civic, juridical functions, the town officials have charge of the religious and the historic festivals. The rounds of fiestas are supervised by the "mayordomo," the guardian of the saints' days, and his assistants. The musicians play a special part in the town and are exempt from all other duties.

(*Continued on page* 239)

ANNOUNCING 3 LECTURES ON THE LIFE AND CULTURE OF

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Editor of "Mexican Folkways"

Author of "Guide to Mexico," "Mexican and Spanish for Your Mexican Visit." Collaborator "Renascent Mexico." Lecturer at the "University of Mexico" and resident of Mexico City.

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Study Table

(*Continued from page* 238)

They furnish the music for secular and religious occasions. The head of the band can sing and perform the ceremonies when the priest is not present.

The chapters, Shrines and Rites, Lore and Tales, and Town Gossip are descriptions of the daily life of the people, their attitudes toward each other, their beliefs, and their customs. All are described in detail through the author's daily experience and contact with the people and events. The fiestas, mayordomias, dances, processions, and pilgrimages go on.

An answer to the question whether Spanish or Indian influences prevail is hard to give. The Spanish friars left little influence, claims Dr. Parsons. The same is true of the priest at the present time. If his fees are high, if he appears to be avaricious, the townspeople feel no cordiality towards him. If he shows sincerity in character, and does not charge much, the people are more attentive.

Much space in the book is given to the cures of illnesses by the *curanderos,* the witch doctors, the faith healers, and the midwives—all of whom are ignorant of the most simple rules of hygiene. The origin of the particular cure may be of interest to folk-lorists but it makes gruesome reading. There is a high child mortality rate in Mitla. The sooner the progressive forces in the government can introduce modern education and hygiene, the better.

Already a beginning has been made through the visit of the Cultural Missions from the Federal Department of Education. The school has been improved. An outdoor basketball field has been built. In the evening the young men of the town play basketball instead of drink. By distributing land, introducing schools and modern techniques in agriculture, the present government in Mexico has accomplished a great deal in bringing improvements into the life of the Indians in the villages.

Dr. Parsons points out, and rightly so, that failure to adopt new modes of life is largely due to poverty. The houses have dirt floors and hardly any furniture. Pottery is used instead of metal or porcelain because it is less expensive. Then we must understand that the things which we take for granted, and which are a part of our own civilization, are unknown and useless to the Zapotecan people because of their lack of contact with them. Another reason for the Indian's economic conservatism is that in the past the Indian did not accumulate any more than was absolutely necessary. There was little inducement in the old system for display; all he wanted was to live like every one else.

The author believes that with the inroads of Capitalism, a lot of the old customs will be swept away; a new class will be brought forth with a new outlook, a more progressive outlook, which will clash with the new capitalists and the old. It is inevitable. It has happened and is happening in other parts of the Republic, and it will happen in Mitla.

It is our duty to learn the truth and help defend the truth. To this end the book is an asset. The photographs, drawings, and maps help give the reader a more intimate understanding of the subjects.

One fault the reviewer finds is the repetition of some of the incidents in many of the chapters and the mass of details, which may make tedious reading to some people.

MORRIS TOPCHEVSKY

Mexico—A Revolution by Education

MEXICO: A REVOLUTION BY EDUCATION. *By George I. Sánchez. 211 pp. New York: The Viking Press, $2.75.*

The American driving to Mexico City over the Pan-American highway will see in almost every village a newly whitewashed building bearing a sign which usually conveys the information that the building is a *rural* school, that the school is *national, revolutionary,* and *socialistic.* The traveler may also happen upon a normal school located in what was once a monastery, but which bears signs of previous decay, recent repairs, and new use. These are signs of the inner transformation of the life of Mexico which is being effected in large part through the new rural "schools of action." *Educar es redimer* (to educate is to redeem) has become the watchword of the Mexican revolution as it faces the fact that the greatest single obstruction to raising the economic and cultural standards of the Mexican peon is the peon himself with his abysmal ignorance of the conditions of health and efficient agriculture.

In 1935 the Julius Rosenwald Fund sent Dr. George I. Sánchez, an admirably equipped man, to Mexico to study this "Revolution by Education." The report which he now makes manifests penetration into the nuances of revolutionary psychology and peasant culture, which make the educational changes in Mexico so difficult to understand, but so interesting to observe. This is the book that will probably be most turned to by those who wish to understand the general background and details of the rural and urban schools which have been established as the chief weapon of the Mexican government against poverty, disease, and servility. The book does not tell the whole story of the present revolution, furnish insight into the bloody conflicts of the labor unions, or reveal the problem of economic colonialism. It touches on such things as the nation's finance, the distribution of land, the coöperatives and the press only incidentally as they affect education. But in telling the story, most interestingly, of the establishment of the 12,000 rural "schools of action" which form the community centers, health outposts, and cultural front of Mexico, the author is dealing with the most important phase of the entire program of national renascence.

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Seminar in Mexico

The Twelfth Seminar in Mexico will be held next July, and will, as usual, be led by a distinguished group of authorities of Pan-American affairs, including Herbert J. Spinden, Rene d'Harnoncourt, Chester Lloyd Jones, and Charles A. Thomson, as well as by prominent Mexicans.

As a part of that Seminar there will be held the First Festival of Pan-American Chamber Music, sponsored by Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge and directed by Carlos Chavez. Membership in this Seminar is open to men and women concerned for the increase of inter-American understanding. Applications and requests for information should be addressed to:

HUBERT HERRING, *Director,*
The Committee on Cultural Relations with Latin America, 289 Fourth Avenue, New York.

Study Table

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The background for these rural schools existed in the failure of colonial education and education under the republic, before 1917. The colonial schools were "spread too thinly." Porfirio Diaz was not convinced that education of the humble classes would do them good. It took the first cultural missionaries following the revolution of 1917 to penetrate into the agricultural areas and there uncover the dismaying plight of the forgotten rural millions and to formulate a program of education which centers around local needs, but at the same time has increasingly come under Federal Control. In the use of education for propaganda, in behalf of the proletarian side of the class struggle, the schools are as integral to the national government as, in their local program, they are to agriculture.

The author believes that the conflict of church and state is unwise and unnecessary, and suggests the formula of a church which restricts itself to spiritual matters. But the Mexican church is far less willing or able to accept this formula than is the government. The temporal interests of the church made it the largest vested interest in the country and in exploiting temporally those whom it was trying to save for the next world, the practice of the church justified the government in curbing its power.

The drastic laws forbidding the church to teach children theology seem to Dr. Sánchez to complicate things for the revolution. When, however, we examine the philosophy advanced by the Mexican government we find strong indications of an irreconcilable conflict between two totalitarian systems. Mexican education is nationalistic in its effort to unify the country; it is socialistic in that it is conducted for the good of the masses; it is rationalistic in its conviction that a new world view is necessary in order to arouse the self-respect of the Mexican and convince him that he can improve his lot in this life by coöperation and education. In developing a desire for redemption in this world through self-help, the government tends to make the sacraments of the church unnecessary and challenges the metaphysics upon which the church is based.

The position of the present government is stated as follows: "One purpose of the Socialistic schools is to counteract the docile acceptance of religious beliefs and superstitions by introducing a rationalizing element into the thinking of the people. While the School is not interested in spiritual beliefs inculcated by religion, it is extremely interested in seeing that an unthinking acceptance or extension of these beliefs does not interfere with the social, economic and cultural well-being of Mexicans." Attorney-General Portes Gil in *The Conflict Between the Civil Power and the Clergy* describes the aims of the schools as follows:

> 1. A dispassionate study of the problems of the Cosmos in accordance with the knowledge contributed by natural and social science.
> 2. The recognition that only to the State falls the task of exercising those activities that tend to achieve the ends sought by the peoples.
> 3. The intervention of the state in the way of guiding the consciousness of the masses, in shops, in the fields and in schools by systematizing the study of human attainments for the better utilization of natural resources, and the fuller satisfaction of human needs; by unfolding the idea of public service and duty so that every human being may contribute to the fulfillment of individual and social aims and not constitute an obstacle in the way of the achievement of the longed for ideal of a society that shall be better organized, more humane and altruistic and with a fuller sense of responsibility; in a few words, a noble effort of the Mexican revolution, which all the peoples of earth will deem just, to dignify and improve the lives of its citizens and to bring a breath of liberty and well-being, and a piece of land and a free conscience to the humble peasant . . .

By pursuing this positive program of education the State with its different world view, its different temper and ideals cuts directly across the pathway of the Church. The State is justified in its effort to pry the church loose from its hold on the social and political life of the nation. The real issue is whether the government's repression of the church in the field of children's education, in support of its own effort to redirect the thought and loyalty of the people to the service of its own ideals, is justified. The formula which Dr. Sánchez presents is an armistice and not a solution for this underlying conflict of ideas and ideals.

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